

ON THE
PECULIAR FORMATION
OF THE
TAILS IN THE MALAY AND MANILLA CATS.

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THE formation of the tail of the Malay

cat is peculiar, and, I believe, has hitherto been unnoticed by any author. Its appearance might induce us to consider it as the result of injury, or disease, did we not observe the same form common to all the individuals of the Malay breed. The accompanying figures will illustrate this remarkable formation.

Fig. 1.

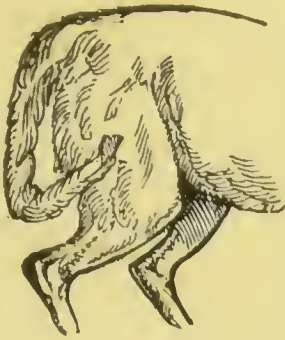


Fig. 3.

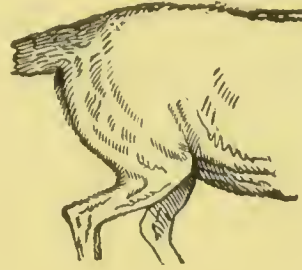


Fig. 2.

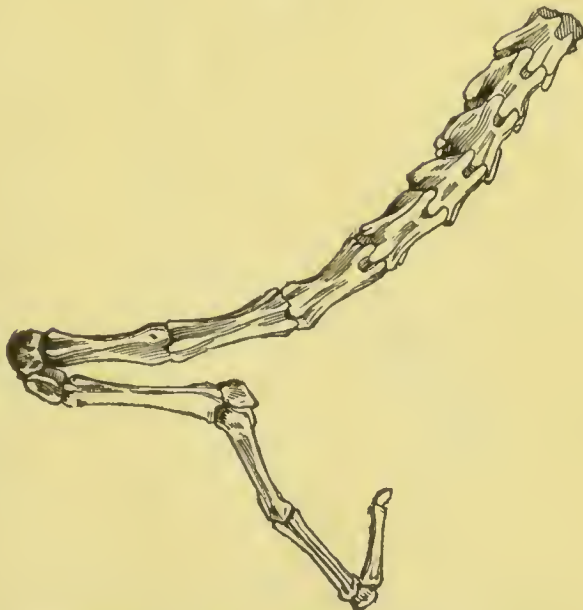


Fig. 1st represents its appearance when covered with the fur, and fig. 2d when dissected so as to shew the skeleton. Preparations in the latter state have been deposited in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, in London. It is a curious circumstance, that, although this deformity exists in the whole race, no regular character in the formation prevails. Capt. Rees, of the *Caleutta* ship, Lord Amherst, related to me that he had had a female Malay eat which bred with an English male eat of the usual species; of the kittens which it bore some had short and others long tails. Nature, ever capricious in her works, has again amused herself with the feline race of the Island of Luçonia, which is almost in a tailless condition. What may be considered the caudal extremity of these latter animals, consists solely of two, or at most three, very short vertebræ, slender and tapering, resembling the terminal vertebræ of the common cat's tail. During my stay at Cavité, the ship's cook had a female eat, of the

Manilla or tailless breed, which produced kittens; some of her offspring were, like the mother, tailless, whilst others had the crooked tail of the Malay eat, to which breed the male parent most probably belonged. The small portion of tail the Manilla cat possesses, has, when covered with the fur, an abrupt termination, presenting the appearance of the extremity having been bitten or chopped off (see Fig. 3); and this is the idea we were first led to entertain. Examination of the skeleton, however, at once sets the question at rest, and sufficiently demonstrates that the deficiency of tail in the Manilla, and its distortion in the Malay eats, is in no way the result of injury.

Analogous to this distortion are the preparations in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in London, of the *perch* (*perca fluviatilis*), found on the estate of Sir W. W. Wynn, with preternatural distorted spine.

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